

Staff Summary for April 17-18, 2024

18. Central Valley Sport Fishing**Today's Item**Information Action

Discuss proposed changes to Central Valley sport fishing regulations.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

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|--|--------------------------|
| • Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) vetting | September 12, 2024; WRC |
| • Notice hearing | February 14-15, 2024 |
| • Today's discussion hearing | April 17-18, 2024 |
| • Adoption hearing | May 15, 2024 |

Background

The Commission generally adopts Central Valley sport fishing on an annual basis, informed by Department recommendations intended to align state regulations with federal fishery management objectives set by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC). In February 2024, the Commission authorized publication of a notice of proposed changes to bag and possession limits for the Sacramento River fall-run Chinook salmon (SRFC) in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers to reflect PFMC management objectives for SRFC stocks. The scope of the options in the initial statement of reasons (ISOR; Exhibit 1) is intentionally broad to allow flexibility during Commission adoption based on the harvest projections identified by PFMC.

In mid-April 2024, PFMC will adopt its recommendation for the upcoming ocean salmon season. At today's meeting, the Department will recommend specific regulation changes based on PFMC's final ocean salmon recommendations. Changes to state regulations are expected to be adopted at the Commission's May 15, 2024 teleconference meeting.

Options included in the ISOR may be adopted independently or in combination and would apply in the anadromous areas of and tributaries to the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and/or Sacramento rivers:

- Option 1 – Allows take of any size Chinook salmon up to the daily bag limits [0-4] and possession limits [0-12].
- Option 2 – Allows take of a limited number of adult Chinook salmon, with grilse Chinook salmon making up the remainder of the daily bag limits [0-4] and possession limits [0-12].
- Option 3 – Allows a **grilse-only** Chinook salmon fishery up to the daily bag limits [0-4] and possession limits [0-12].
- Option 4 – Closed to take and possession of Chinook salmon.

The four options provide the Commission flexibility; it can choose to adopt various options for each river section independently or combine them to meet PFMC SRFC management objectives and maximize recreational salmon fishing opportunities.

Staff Summary for April 17-18, 2024

At today's meeting, the Department will present its recommendation.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

In compliance with CEQA, the Department prepared a draft addendum (Exhibit 3) to *2022 Negative Declaration (SCH No. 2022040250) for the Central Valley Sport Fishing - 2022*; the negative declaration was certified by the Commission in May 2022. The addendum is intended to inform Commission consideration of proposed amendments to daily bag and possession limits for Chinook salmon, as described in the proposed rulemaking.

The 2022 negative declaration concluded that there would be no significant impacts for the range of daily bag and possession limits considered under regulatory options 1, 2, and 3. Since the proposed daily bag and possession limits for 2024 fall within the previously analyzed range, and the proposed amendments use similar regulatory options, there are no anticipated new, significant, or substantially more severe environmental impacts.

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. [Central Valley sport fishing ISOR, dated January 9, 2024](#)
2. [Department memo, transmitting draft CEQA addendum](#)
3. [2024 CEQA Central Valley sport fishing addendum](#)

Motion (N/A)

State of California
Fish and Game Commission
Initial Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action
Amend Subsections (b)(4), (b)(43), (b)(66), and (b)(80) of Section 7.40
Title 14, California Code of Regulations
Re: Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations

I. Date of Initial Statement of Reasons: January 9, 2024

II. Dates and Locations of Scheduled Hearings

(a) Notice Hearing

Date: February 15, 2024

Location: Sacramento

(b) Discussion Hearing

Date: April 18, 2024

Location: San Jose

(c) Adoption Hearing

Date: May 15, 2024

Location: Webinar/Teleconference

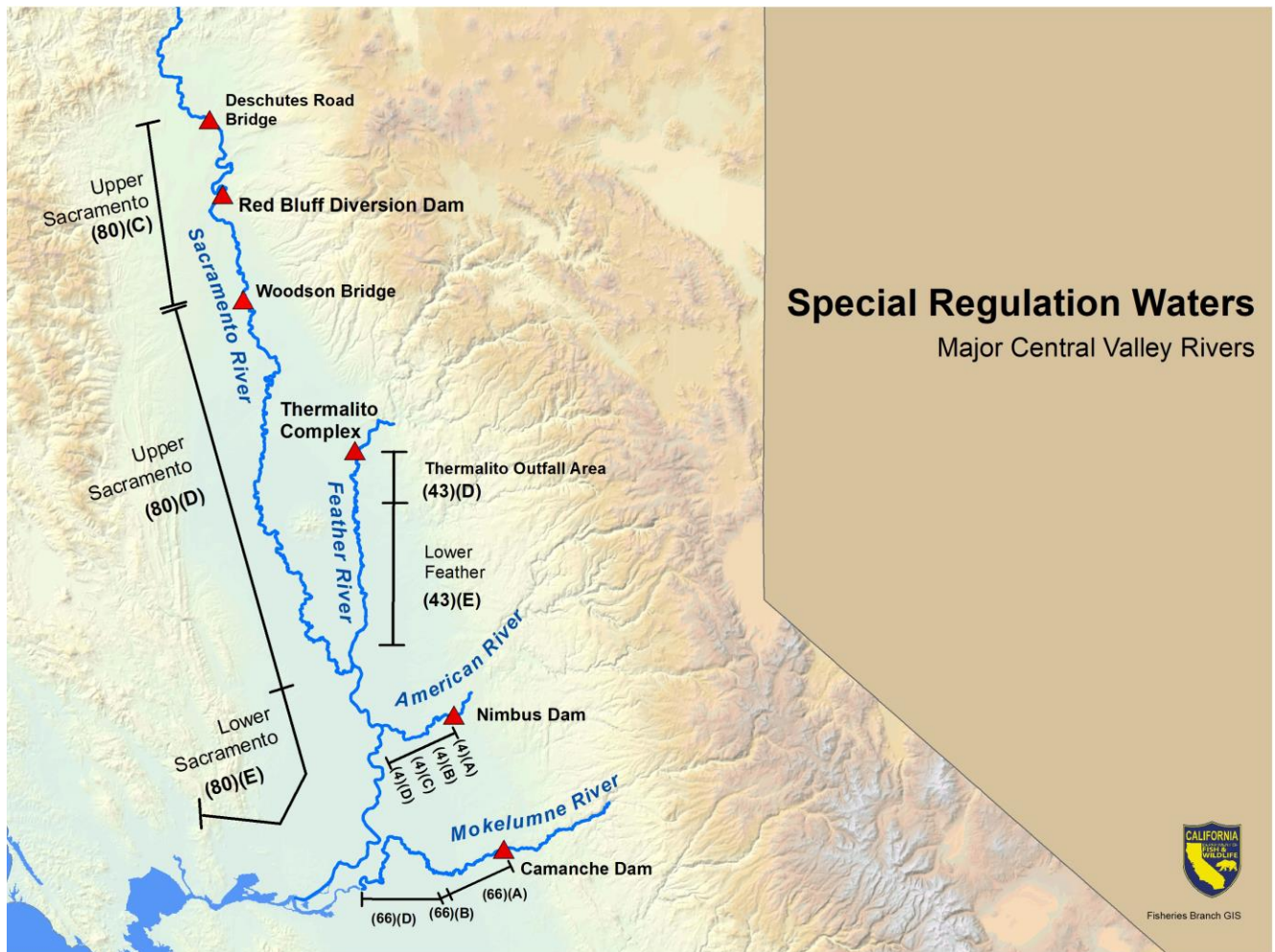
III. Description of Regulatory Action

(a) Statement of Specific Purpose of Regulatory Change and Factual Basis for Determining that Regulation Change is Reasonably Necessary

Unless otherwise specified, all section references in this document are to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

Current regulations in subsections (b)(4), (b)(43), (b)(66), and (b)(80) of Section 7.40 prescribe the 2023 season dates and daily bag and possession limits for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*; SRFC) sport fishing in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers, respectively. Collectively, these four rivers constitute the “Central Valley fishery” for SRFC for purposes of this document (Figure 1). Each year, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) recommends new Chinook Salmon daily bag and possession limits for consideration by the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) to align with up-to-date management goals, as set forth below.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) is responsible for adopting recommendations for the management of recreational and commercial ocean salmon fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (three to 200 miles offshore) off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. When approved by the Secretary of Commerce, these recommendations are implemented as ocean salmon fishing regulations by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).



Special Regulation Waters

Major Central Valley Rivers



Fisheries Branch GIS

Figure 1. Map of the 2024 “Central Valley fishery” for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon, encompassing the following rivers and their respective subsections of Section 7.40: American (b)(4), Feather (b)(43), Mokelumne (b)(66), and Sacramento (b)(80).

The PFMC will develop the annual Pacific coast ocean salmon fisheries regulatory options for public review at its March 2024 meeting and will adopt its final regulatory recommendations at its April 2024 meeting based on the PFMC salmon abundance estimates and recommendations for ocean harvest for the coming season. Based on the April 2024 recommendation by PFMC, the Department will recommend specific bag and possession limit regulations for the Central Valley fishery to the Commission at its April 18, 2024 meeting. The Commission will then consider adoption of the Central Valley sport fishing regulations at its May 15, 2024, meeting.

(b) Proposed Regulations

CHINOOK SALMON BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS

The Department recognizes the uncertainty of SRFC in-river harvest projections. Therefore, for the 2024 Central Valley fishery, the Department is presenting four regulatory options for the Commission’s consideration to tailor 2024 Central Valley fishery management to target 2024 in-river fisheries harvest projections. The Commission may adopt these options for each river section independently, or in combination to meet PFMC SRFC management objectives and determine the recreational salmon fishing opportunities in the Central Valley.

- Option 1 is the most liberal of the options, and allows take of any size Chinook Salmon up to the daily bag and possession limits.
- Option 2 allows for take of a limited number of adult Chinook Salmon, with grilse Chinook Salmon (two-year old salmon) making up the remainder of the daily bag and possession limits.
- Option 3 is a more conservative option, and allows for a grilse-only Chinook Salmon fishery.
- Option 4 is the most conservative option, and prohibits the take and possession of Chinook Salmon in all anadromous areas of and tributaries to the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers.

Key to Proposed Regulatory Changes:

Because the PFMC recommendations are not known at this time, a range shown in [brackets] in the text below of bag and possession limits is indicated where it is desirable to continue Chinook Salmon fishing in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers.

The following options are provided for Commission consideration:

Option 1 – Any Size Chinook Salmon Fishery

This option would allow anglers to take up to [0-4] Chinook Salmon of any size per day and have [0-12] Chinook Salmon in possession. This option is the Department’s preferred option if the 2024 SRFC stock abundance forecast is sufficiently high to avoid the need to constrain in-river SRFC harvest.

American River, subsection 7.40(b)(4):

- (B) From the United States Geological Survey (USGS) gauging station cable crossing about 300 yards downstream from the Nimbus Hatchery fish rack site to the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park.

July 16 through October 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

- (C) From the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park downstream to the Jibboom Street bridge.

July 16 through December 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

- (D) From the Jibboom Street bridge to the mouth.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

Feather River, subsection 7.40(b)(43):

- (D) From the unimproved boat ramp above the Thermalito Afterbay Outfall to 200 yards

above the Live Oak boat ramp.

July 16 through October 31 with a daily bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

- (E) From 200 yards above the Live Oak boat ramp to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection, the lower boundary is defined as a straight line drawn from the peninsula point on the west bank to the Verona Marine boat ramp.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

Mokelumne River, subsection 7.40(b)(66):

- (A) From Camanche Dam to Elliott Road.

July 16 through October 15 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

- (B) From Elliott Road to the Woodbridge Irrigation District Dam and including Lodi Lake.

From July 16 through December 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

- (D) From the Lower Sacramento Road bridge to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection, this river segment is defined as Mokelumne River and its tributary sloughs downstream of the Lower Sacramento Road bridge and east of Highway 160 and north of Highway 12.

From July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

Sacramento River and tributaries below Keswick Dam, subsection 7.40(b)(80):

- (C) Sacramento River from the Deschutes Road bridge to Woodson Bridge.

August 1 through October 31, and November 1 through December 31, with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

- (D) Sacramento River from Woodson Bridge to the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

- (E) Sacramento River from the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing to the Carquinez Bridge (includes Suisun Bay, Grizzly Bay and all tributary sloughs west of Highway 160).

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

Option 2 – Limited Adult and Grilse Salmon Fishery

This option would allow the take of a limited number of adult Chinook Salmon, with grilse Chinook Salmon (two-year old salmon) making up the remainder of the daily bag and possession limits. This option would allow anglers to take up to [0-4] Chinook Salmon per day, with no more than [0-4] of those salmon over 27 inches total length, and have [0-12] Chinook Salmon in possession, of which no more than [0-12] salmon may be over 27 inches total length. Should a reduction in the adult component of the stock be indicated by PFMC harvest projections, the Department is recommending specifying angling opportunities on the smaller, and possibly more numerous grilse salmon to increase angling harvest opportunities. Grilse returns from the previous season are included in pre-season stock abundance forecasts, but are not included in the current season adult returns used for evaluating conservation targets for SRFC. Due to their smaller size, grilse are typically outcompeted by larger adults, and contribute significantly less to the spawning population, and so they would be available for harvest with minimal impact to juvenile recruitment for the current season. Take of adult salmon would be limited under regulation, and the subsequent juvenile production would help rebuild the depressed stock size at a time when there is the need to restrict harvest of adult salmon.

The Department recommends a grilse salmon size limit of less than or equal to 27 inches total length based on an analysis of grilse data conducted by Department staff in 2018 (refer to Section III(g) below). A 27-inch total length grilse salmon cutoff is the best balance between angling harvest opportunity of possibly abundant smaller, two-year old male salmon and preserving the limited number of females available to spawn.

American River, subsection 7.40(b)(4):

- (B) From the U.S. Geological Survey gauging station cable crossing about 300 yards downstream from the Nimbus Hatchery fish rack site to the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park.

July 16 through October 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0–12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

- (C) From the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park downstream to the Jibboom Street bridge

July 16 through December 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0–12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

- (D) From the Jibboom Street bridge to the mouth.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0–12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

Feather River, subsection 7.40(b)(43):

- (D) From the unimproved boat ramp above the Thermalito Afterbay Outfall to 200 yards above the Live Oak boat ramp.

July 16 through October 31 with a daily bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0–12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

- (E) From 200 yards above Live Oak boat ramp to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection, the lower boundary is defined as a straight line drawn from the peninsula point on the west bank to the Verona Marine boat ramp.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

Mokelumne River, subsection 7.40(b)(66)

- (A) From Camanche Dam to Elliott Road.

July 16 through October 15 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

- (B) From Elliott Road to the Woodbridge Irrigation District Dam and including Lodi Lake.

From July 16 through December 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

- (D) From the Lower Sacramento Road bridge to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection, this river segment is defined as Mokelumne River and its tributary sloughs downstream of the Lower Sacramento Road bridge and east of Highway 160 and north of Highway 12.

From July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

Sacramento River and tributaries below Keswick Dam, subsection 7.40(b)(80):

- (C) Sacramento River from the Deschutes Road bridge to Woodson Bridge.

August 1 through October 31, and November 1 through December 31, with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

- (D) Sacramento River from Woodson Bridge to the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

- (E) Sacramento River from the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing to the Carquinez Bridge (includes Suisun Bay, Grizzly Bay and all tributary sloughs west of Highway 160).

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit – [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

Option 3 – Grilse-only Salmon Fishery

This option would allow for a grilse-only salmon fishery. This option would allow anglers to take [0-4] Chinook Salmon with a maximum size of 27 inches total length and have [0-12] Chinook Salmon in possession, with a maximum size of 27 inches total length. Should a reduction in the adult component of the stock be indicated by PFMC harvest projections, the Department is recommending specifying angling opportunities on the smaller, and possibly more numerous grilse salmon to increase angling harvest opportunities. Grilse returns from the previous season are included in pre-season stock abundance forecasts, but are not included in the current season adult returns used for evaluating conservation targets for SRFC. Due to their smaller size, grilse are typically outcompeted by larger adults, and contribute significantly less to the spawning population, and so they would be available for harvest with minimal impact to juvenile recruitment for the current season. Take of adult salmon would be prohibited under regulation, and the subsequent juvenile production would help rebuild the depressed stock size at a time when there is the need to restrict harvest of adult salmon.

The Department recommends a grilse salmon size limit of less than or equal to 27 inches total length based on an analysis of grilse data conducted by Department staff in 2018 (refer to Section III(g) below). A 27-inch total length grilse salmon cutoff is the best balance between angling harvest opportunity of possibly abundant smaller, two-year old male salmon and preserving the limited number of female salmon available to spawn.

American River, subsection 7.40(b)(4):

- (B) From the U.S. Geological Survey gauging station cable crossing about 300 yards downstream from the Nimbus Hatchery fish rack site to the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park.

July 16 through October 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

- (C) From the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park downstream to the Jibboom Street bridge.

July 16 through December 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

- (D) From the Jibboom Street bridge to the mouth.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Feather River, subsection 7.40(b)(43):

- (D) From the unimproved boat ramp above the Thermalito Afterbay Outfall to 200 yards above the Live Oak boat ramp.

July 16 through October 31 with a daily bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

- (E) From 200 yards above Live Oak boat ramp to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection, the lower boundary is defined as a straight line drawn from the peninsula point on the west bank to the Verona Marine boat ramp.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Mokelumne River, subsection 7.40(b)(66):

- (A) From Camanche Dam to Elliott Road.

July 16 through October 15 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

- (B) From Elliott Road to the Woodbridge Irrigation District Dam and including lake Lodi.

From July 16 through December 31 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

- (D) From the Lower Sacramento Road bridge to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection,

this river segment is defined as Mokelumne River and its tributary sloughs downstream of the Lower Sacramento Road bridge and east of Highway 160 and north of Highway 12.

From July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Sacramento River and tributaries below Keswick Dam, subsection 7.40(b)(80):

(C) Sacramento River from the Deschutes Road bridge to Woodson Bridge.

August 1 through October 31, and November 1 through December 31, with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

(D) Sacramento River from Woodson Bridge to the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing.

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

(E) Sacramento River from the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing to the Carquinez Bridge (includes Suisun Bay, Grizzly Bay and all tributary sloughs west of Highway 160).

July 16 through December 16 with a bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Option 4 – No Salmon Fishing in all Central Valley Rivers, Streams, and Tributaries

This option would close salmon fishing in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and/or Sacramento rivers, and all associated tributaries, or specific areas/bodies of water, as specified by river reach(es) in subsection 7.40(b) to provide protection to SRFC should a reduction in the stock be indicated by PFMC abundance projections. In any year, should the PFMC recommend a complete or near complete closure to ocean recreational salmon fishing, this option will give the Department flexibility to respond to and support any federal action in the ocean. This option prohibits all methods of targeting salmon including catch and release fishing. Unless otherwise noted, this option would still allow take of other species in specific areas/bodies of water, as specified by river reach(es) in subsection 7.40(b) (See Section VII below).

American River, subsection 7.40(b)(4):

(B) From the U.S. Geological Survey gauging station cable crossing about 300 yards downstream from the Nimbus Hatchery fish rack site to the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park.

July 16 through October 31. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

(C) From the SMUD power line crossing at the southwest boundary of Ancil Hoffman Park

downstream to the Jibboom Street bridge.

July 16 through December 31. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

- (D) From the Jibboom Street bridge to the mouth.

July 16 through December 16. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

Feather River, subsection 7.40(b)(43):

- (D) From the unimproved boat ramp above the Thermalito Afterbay Outfall to 200 yards above the Live Oak boat ramp.

July 16 through October 31. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

- (E) From 200 yards above Live Oak boat ramp to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection, the lower boundary is defined as a straight line drawn from the peninsula point on the west bank to the Verona Marine boat ramp.

July 16 through December 16. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

Mokelumne River, subsection 7.40(b)(66):

- (A) From Camanche Dam to Elliott Road.

July 16 through October 15. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

- (B) From Elliott Road to the Woodbridge Irrigation District Dam and including Lodi Lake.

From July 16 through December 31. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

- (D) From the Lower Sacramento Road bridge to the mouth. For purposes of this subsection, this river segment is defined as Mokelumne River and its tributary sloughs downstream of the Lower Sacramento Road bridge and east of Highway 160 and north of Highway 12.

From July 16 through December 16. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

Sacramento River and tributaries below Keswick Dam, subsection 7.40(b)(80):

- (C) Sacramento River from the Deschutes Road bridge to Woodson Bridge.

August 1 through October 31, and November 1 through December 31. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

- (D) Sacramento River from Woodson Bridge to the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing.

July 16 through December 16. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

- (E) Sacramento River from the Highway 113 bridge near Knights Landing to the Carquinez Bridge (includes Suisun Bay, Grizzly Bay and all tributary sloughs west of Highway 160).

July 16 through December 16. No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

(c) Necessity of the Proposed Regulation Changes

The proposed regulations are necessary to adjust Chinook Salmon bag and possession limits, size limits, and open seasons for the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers for consistency with PFMC salmon abundance estimates and recommendations for ocean harvest for the coming season.

(d) Goals and Benefits of the Regulation

As stated in Fish and Game Code Section 1700, Conservation of Aquatic Resources: It is the policy of this state to encourage the conservation, maintenance, and utilization of the living resources of the ocean and other waters under the jurisdiction and influence of the state for the benefit of all the citizens of the state and to promote the development of local fisheries and distant water fisheries based in California in harmony with international law, respecting fishing and the conservation of the living resources of the ocean and other waters under the jurisdiction and influence of the state. The objectives of this policy include, but are not limited to, the maintenance of sufficient populations of all species of aquatic organisms to ensure their continued existence, and the maintenance of a sufficient resource to support a reasonable sport use.

Adoption of science-based SRFC bag and possession limits provides for the maintenance of sufficient populations of Chinook Salmon to ensure their continued existence.

The benefits of the proposed regulations are consistency with federal fishery management goals, sustainable management of the SRFC fishery, and general health and welfare of California residents.

(e) Authority and Reference Sections from Fish and Game Code for Regulation

Authority: Sections 200, 205, 265, 270, 315, 316.5, 399 and 2084, Fish and Game Code.

Reference: Sections 200, 205, 265, 270, 316.5 and 2084, Fish and Game Code.

(f) Specific Technology or Equipment Required by Regulatory Change

None.

(g) Identification of Reports or Documents Supporting Regulation Change

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, West Coast Region, 2016. *5-Year Review: Summary and Evaluation of Central Valley Spring-run Chinook Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit*. Available from: <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/17018>

Pacific Fishery Management Council, 2023. *Review of 2022 Ocean Salmon Fisheries: Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Document for the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan*. Available from: <https://www.pcouncil.org/documents/2023/02/review-of-2022-ocean-salmon-fisheries.pdf/>

Pahlke, K, 1988. *Length Conversion Equations for Sockeye, Chinook, and Coho salmon in southeast Alaska. Regional Information Report No. Ij88-03*. Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Commercial Fisheries, Southeast Region. Available from: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=164436&inline>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, *2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, available from <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2018/demo/fhw16-nat.pdf>

(h) Public Discussions of Proposed Regulations Prior to Notice Publication

The Department presented the proposed amendments to the SRFC bag and possession limits at the Commission's Wildlife Resources Committee meeting on September 19, 2023.

IV. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change

No alternatives were identified by or brought to the attention of Commission staff that would have the same desired regulatory effect.

(b) No Change Alternative

SRFC Adult Stocks

The no change alternative would leave existing 2023 regulations in place. The no change alternative would not allow for appropriate harvest rates, while the proposed regulations will allow the state to harmonize its bag and possession limits with NMFS' regulations.

V. Mitigation Measures Required by Regulatory Action

The proposed regulatory action will have no negative impact on the environment; therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

VI. Impact of Regulatory Action

The potential for significant statewide adverse economic impacts that might result from the proposed regulatory action has been assessed, and the following initial determinations relative to the required statutory categories have been made:

(a) Significant Statewide Adverse Economic Impact Directly Affecting Businesses, Including the Ability of California Businesses to Compete with Businesses in Other States

The proposed action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting business, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states. The proposed changes are necessary for the continued preservation of the resource, while providing inland sport fishing opportunities and thus, the prevention of adverse economic impacts.

(b) Impact on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State, the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses, or the Expansion of Businesses in California; Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents, Worker Safety, and the State's Environment

The Commission does not anticipate significant adverse economic impacts but acknowledges the potential for short-term negative impacts on the creation or elimination of jobs within the state. The Commission anticipates no adverse impacts on the creation of new business, the elimination of existing businesses or the expansion of businesses in California. The

management of an ongoing Chinook Salmon sport fishery with annual variations in the bag and possession limits and/or the implementation of a size limit is not anticipated to significantly impact the volume of business activity.

The loss of up to 22 jobs with Option 2, 43 jobs for Option 3, and 108 jobs for Option 4 is not expected to eliminate businesses because projected reduction in fishing days is expected to be partially offset by opportunities to fish for grilse Chinook Salmon and other species for Option 2 and 3 and continued opportunities for other non-salmonid species for Option 4.

The Commission anticipates benefits to the health and welfare of California residents. Providing opportunities for a Chinook Salmon sport fishery encourages consumption of a nutritious food. The Commission anticipates benefits to the environment by the sustainable management of Chinook Salmon resources in the Central Valley.

The Commission does not anticipate any benefits to worker safety.

Other benefits of the proposed regulations are concurrence with federal fishery management goals and promotion of businesses that rely on Central Valley sport fishing.

(c) Cost Impacts on a Representative Private Person or Business

The Commission is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action.

(d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State: None.

(e) Nondiscretionary Costs/Savings to Local Agencies: None.

(f) Programs Mandated on Local Agencies or School Districts: None.

(g) Costs Imposed on Any Local Agency or School District that is Required to be Reimbursed Under Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4, Government Code: None.

(h) Effect on Housing Costs: None.

VII. Economic Impact Assessment

This action is expected to sustain fishery activity within the range of historically typical seasons. Lower PFMC harvest forecasts can result in a smaller bag and possession limit, (more conservative), whereas larger PFMC harvest forecasts can result in a higher bag and possession limit (more liberal), both of which can skew the average fishing activity over seasons. The potential difference in total economic impact between a typical season and the options under consideration range from \$0 to -\$13.2 M as shown in Table 1 below. However, the anticipated total economic impacts may vary a bit more or less than the estimates of any one single option, as the proposed options may be adopted as a combination of bag and possession limits by body of water so as to minimize adverse impacts to fishing opportunity and economic activity.

A five-year average over the 2017-2021 seasons (the 2023 salmon closure year is excluded in the baseline) for the Central Valley fishery experiences about 174,192 sport salmon angler days in which anglers spend an average of \$108 per day contributing a total of \$18.8 M (2022\$) in direct expenditures to California businesses. This expenditure is received by area businesses that spend a share on inputs and payroll. As employees receive income, their

household spending again circulates in the local economy and statewide. These multiplier effects have historically resulted in an estimated total economic impact of \$26.4 M (2022\$), that supports up to 216 jobs throughout the state.

The regional and statewide economic impacts factor into the effort to balance the maintenance of the recreational fishery with resource preservation, while complying with PFMC allocations. The potential economic impacts that may result from each in-river harvest projection as specified in Option 1, Option 2, Option 3, and Option 4 are evaluated in terms of each scenario’s probable impact on the number of Chinook Salmon and other species’ angler days, and thus angler expenditures that circulate within the area and throughout the state.

Table 1. Central Valley Fishery Projected Economic Impacts 2024

Regulation	Angler Days	Angler Expenditures	Total Econ Impact	Jobs
Option 1	174,192 ¹	\$ 18,812,736	\$ 26,453,598	216
Option 2	156,773	\$ 16,931,462	\$ 23,808,238	194
Option 3	139,354	\$ 15,050,189	\$ 21,162,878	173
Option 4	87,096	\$ 9,406,368	\$ 13,226,799	108

Difference	Angler Day Loss	Expenditure Loss	Total Impact Loss	Job Loss
Option 1	0	\$ -	\$ -	0
Option 2	-17,419	-\$1,881,274	-\$ 2,645,360	(22)
Option 3	-34,838	-\$3,762,547	-\$ 5,290,720	(43)
Option 4	-87,096 ²	-\$9,406,368	-\$13,226,799	(108)

¹The base year for angler days is the five-year average of 2017–2021 derived from Department creel survey data. The 2017-2021 time period is more historically typical with no emergency actions that reduced fishing opportunity. ²Projected angler days with a salmon closure assumes that 50% of effort will persist as anglers shift or continue to pursue opportunities for other fish species. Sources: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fisheries Branch economic analysis; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation; expenditure figures are in (2022\$), adjusted for inflation with Implicit Price Deflator for Personal Consumption Expenditures, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Historical correlations between catch limits and fishery participation levels suggest that Option 1 could enable a historically typical (5-year average) number of angler days for the 2024 Chinook Salmon season on the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers. Option 2 may result in declines in angler days of 17,419 below a typical year. Option 3 may result in larger declines, or an estimated 34,838 fewer angler days. Option 4 may result in an estimated 50 percent reduction or 87,096 fewer angler days throughout the Central Valley fishery.

A share (approximately 50% for Option 4) of anglers are assumed to continue to pursue other in-river sport fish aside from Chinook Salmon, such as steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), Striped Bass (*Morone saxatilis*), Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), White Sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*) and catfish (*Ictalurus spp.*), that may mitigate any adverse impacts from any reductions in salmon fishing. In sum, the options presented to the Commission were conceived with the goal of enabling levels of recreational SRFC fishing in the range of historical averages, and thus should not be a source of significant adverse economic impacts.

(a) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate that any of the proposed options would induce substantial impacts on the creation or elimination of jobs. For Option 1, no change in job creation or elimination is anticipated. Option 2, Option 3, and Option 4 have the potential to result in fewer angler visits, and absent substitution toward other sportfish and/or activities in the affected areas, the reduction in angler spending could reduce the support for 0-108 jobs statewide.

(b) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate that any of the proposed options would induce substantial impacts on the creation of new business or the elimination of existing businesses, because the proposed economic impacts of the regulations are unlikely to be substantial enough to stimulate the creation of new businesses or cause the elimination of existing businesses.

(c) Effects of the Regulation on the Expansion of Businesses Currently Doing Business Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate that any of the proposed options would induce substantial impacts on the expansion of businesses currently doing business within the state. The proposed regulations are not anticipated to increase demand for services or products from the existing businesses that serve inland sport fishermen. The number of fishing trips and angler economic contributions are expected to remain within the range of historical averages.

(d) Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents

The Commission anticipates benefits to the health and welfare of California residents. Chinook Salmon is a nutritious food source and providing inland sport fishery opportunities encourages consumption of this nutritious food. Sport fishing also contributes to increased mental health of its practitioners, as fishing is a hobby and form of relaxation for many. Sport fishing also provides opportunities for multi-generational family activities and promotes respect for California's environment by younger generations, the future stewards of California's natural resources.

(e) Benefits of the Regulation to Worker Safety

The Commission does not anticipate any benefits to worker safety from the proposed regulations because inland sport fishing does not impact working conditions.

(f) Benefits of the Regulation to the State's Environment

Under all options the Commission anticipates benefits to the environment in the sustainable management of SRFC. It is the policy of this state to encourage the conservation, maintenance, and utilization of the living resources of the ocean and other waters under the jurisdiction and influence of the state for the benefit of all the citizens of the state and to promote the development of local fisheries and distant water fisheries based in California in harmony with international law, respecting fishing and the conservation of the living resources of the ocean and other waters under the jurisdiction and influence of the state. The objectives of this policy include, but are not limited to, the maintenance of sufficient populations of all species of aquatic organisms to ensure their continued existence, and the maintenance of a sufficient resource to support a reasonable sport use.

In accordance with this policy, adoption of science-based inland Chinook Salmon bag and possession limits provides for the maintenance of sufficient populations of salmon to ensure their continued existence and thus continued economic stimulus.

(g) Other Benefits of the Regulation

Other benefits of the regulation include consistency with federal fishery management goals.

Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

Unless otherwise specified, all section references in this document are to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

Current regulations in subsections (b)(4), (b)(43), (b)(66), and (b)(80) of Section 7.40 prescribe the 2023 seasons and daily bag and possession limits for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*; SRFC) sport fishing in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers, respectively. Collectively, these four rivers constitute the “Central Valley fishery” for SRFC for purposes of this document. In considering the current 2023 regulations the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) accepted the Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (Department) recommendation for the most conservative option that prohibited fishing for Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley.

Each year, the Department recommends new Chinook Salmon bag and possession limits for consideration by the Commission to align the fishing limits with up-to-date management goals, as set forth below.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) is responsible for adopting recommendations for the management of recreational and commercial ocean salmon fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (three to 200 miles offshore) off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. When approved by the Secretary of Commerce, these recommendations are implemented as ocean salmon fishing regulations by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

The PFMC will develop the annual Pacific coast ocean salmon fisheries regulatory options for public review at its March 2024 meeting and will adopt its final regulatory recommendations at its April 2024 meeting based on the PFMC salmon abundance estimates and recommendations for ocean harvest for the coming season. Based on the April 2024 recommendation by PFMC, the Department will recommend specific bag and possession limit regulations to the Commission at its April 18, 2024, meeting. The Commission will then consider adoption of the Central Valley sport fishing regulations at its May 15, 2024, meeting.

Proposed Regulations

Chinook Salmon Bag and Possession Limits

The Department recognizes the uncertainty of SRFC in-river harvest projections. Therefore, for the 2024 Central Valley fishery, the Department is presenting four regulatory options for the Commission’s consideration to tailor 2024 Central Valley fishery management to target 2024 in-river fisheries harvest projections. The Commission may adopt these options for each river section independently, or in combination to meet PFMC SRFC management objectives.

- American River, subsections 7.40(b)(4)(B), (C) and (D).
- Feather River, subsection 7.40(b)(43)(D) and (E).
- Mokelumne River, subsection 7.40(b)(66)(A), (B) and (D).
- Sacramento River below Keswick Dam, subsection 7.40(b)(80)(C), (D) and (E).

The following options are provided for Commission consideration:

Option 1 – Any Size Chinook Salmon Fishery

This option is the Department's preferred option if the 2024 SRFC stock abundance forecast is sufficiently high to avoid the need to constrain in-river SRFC harvest.

Bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon.

Option 2 – Limited Adult and Grilse Salmon Fishery

Bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0-4] fish over 27 inches total length may be retained.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon of which no more than [0–12] fish may be over 27 inches total length.

Option 3 – Grilse Salmon Fishery Only

Bag limit of [0-4] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Possession limit - [0-12] Chinook Salmon less than or equal to 27 inches total length.

Option 4– No Salmon Fishing in all Central Valley Rivers, Streams, and Tributaries

No take or possession of Chinook Salmon.

Benefits of the Proposed Regulations

The Commission anticipates benefits to the environment in the sustainable management of Central Valley Chinook Salmon resources. Other benefits of the proposed regulations are consistency with federal fishery management goals, and health and welfare of California residents.

Consistency and Compatibility with Existing Regulations

Article IV, Section 20 of the State Constitution specifies that the Legislature may delegate to the Commission such powers relating to the protection and propagation of fish and game as the Legislature sees fit. The Legislature has delegated to the Commission the power to regulate sport fishing in waters of the state (Fish and Game Code sections 200, 205, 315 and 316.5). The Commission has reviewed its own regulations and finds that the proposed regulations are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing state regulations. The Commission has searched the California Code of Regulations and finds no other state agency regulations pertaining to Chinook Salmon sport fishing seasons, bag, and possession limits for Central Valley sport fishing.

Memorandum

Original on file;
Received April 8, 2024

Date: April 5, 2024

To: Melissa Miller-Henson
Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director

Subject: **Submittal of Addenda to the 2022 Negative Declarations Regarding Central Valley and Klamath River Basin Sport Fishing Regulations, Title 14, Section 7.40, California Code of Regulations (CCR)**

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has prepared the enclosed addenda pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., to inform consideration by the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) of proposed amendments to existing regulations governing Klamath River Basin (KRB) sport fishing. The Commission proposes to amend the sport fishing regulations for the “Central Valley fishery” for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon (SRFC), encompassing the following rivers and their respective subsections of Section 7.40, Title 14, CCR: American (b)(4), Feather (b)(43), Mokelumne (b)(66), and Sacramento (b)(80). The Commission also proposes to amend the KRB sport fishing regulations as set forth in Title 14, Section 7.40(b)(50) for Klamath River fall-run Chinook Salmon (KRFC).

In 2022, the Commission certified a Final Negative Declaration (ND) Regarding Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations (2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations ND)(SCH No. 2018112036) as the lead agency under CEQA as part of the Commission’s review and adoption of the Central Valley sport fishing regulations which focused on the potential for significant environmental impacts from a potential increase or decrease of SRFC daily bag and possession limits for the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers. The 2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations ND found no significant impacts for the range of daily bag and possession limits for SRFC sport fishing under regulatory Options 1, 2, and 3. The 2024 proposed daily bag and possession limits fall within the previously analyzed range of bag and possession limits and regulatory options. Therefore, there are no new significant or substantially more severe impacts from amending the SRFC sport fishing regulations to either decrease or increase the daily bag and possession limits on the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers.

In 2022, the Commission certified a Final ND Regarding Klamath River Basin Sport Fishing Regulations (2022 Klamath River Basin Sport Fishing Regulations ND)(SCH

Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission
April 5, 2024
Page 2

No. 2022040251) as the lead agency under CEQA as part of the Commission's review and adoption of KRB sport fishing regulations which focused on the potential for significant environmental impacts from a potential increase or decrease of KRFC daily bag and possession limits for the Klamath and Trinity rivers. The 2022 Klamath River Basin Sport Fishing Regulations ND found no significant impacts for the KRB quota range and range of daily bag and possession limits for KRFC sport fishing. The 2024 proposed KRB quota, and daily bag and possession limit ranges fall within the previously analyzed ranges for the KRB quota and proposed bag and possession limits for KRFC stocks. Therefore, there are no new significant or substantially more severe impacts from amending the KRB sport fishing regulations to either decrease or increase the KRFC daily bag and possession limits on the Klamath and Trinity rivers.

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed documents, please contact Karen Mitchell, Senior Environmental Scientist, at (916) 205-0250.

Attachments

cc: Chad Dibble, Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division

Jay Rowan, Branch Chief
Fisheries Branch

Brett Kormos, Program Manager
Northern Region (Region 1)

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Fisheries Branch

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Fish and Game Commission

David Thesell, Program Manager
Fish and Game Commission

**ANALYSIS OF THE 2024
CENTRAL VALLEY SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS**

ADDENDUM

**to the 2022 NEGATIVE DECLARATION
REGARDING CENTRAL VALLEY
SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS**

prepared by the

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

on behalf of

CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

as

LEAD AGENCY UNDER THE

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

for the

REGULARY NOTICED RULEMAKING ACTION TO AMEND

SECTION 7.40 TITLE 14,

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS

2024 FISHING SEASON

(OAL Notice File No. 2024-0223-01)

INTRODUCTION

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has prepared this addendum pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*, to inform consideration by the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) of proposed amendments to existing regulations governing Central Valley sport fishing. Annually, CDFW recommends Central Valley sport fishing regulations to the Commission. The Commission then makes the final determination on what amendments to the regulations should be implemented and is the lead agency for the purposes of CEQA. Under Fish and Game Code (F&G Code) Section 200, the Commission has the authority to regulate the taking or possession of fish for the purpose of sport fishing.

Current regulations in subsections (b)(4), (b)(43), (b)(66), and (b)(80) of Section 7.40 prescribe the 2023 season dates and daily bag and possession limits for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*; SRFC) sport fishing in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers, respectively. Collectively, these four rivers constitute the “Central Valley fishery” for SRFC for purposes of this document (Figure 1). Each year, CDFW recommends new SRFC daily bag and possession limits for consideration by the Commission to align with up-to-date management goals, as set forth below.

The Commission established daily bag and possession limits for SRFC on the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers in 2022 with the certification of a Final Negative Declaration under CEQA (2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations Negative Declaration (ND))(SCH No. 2022040250). The 2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations ND provides relevant and important informational value as the Commission, as the CEQA lead agency, considers proposed amendments to the existing regulations for the 2024 SRFC sport fishing season in California. This addendum documents the Commission’s consideration of related environmental effects.

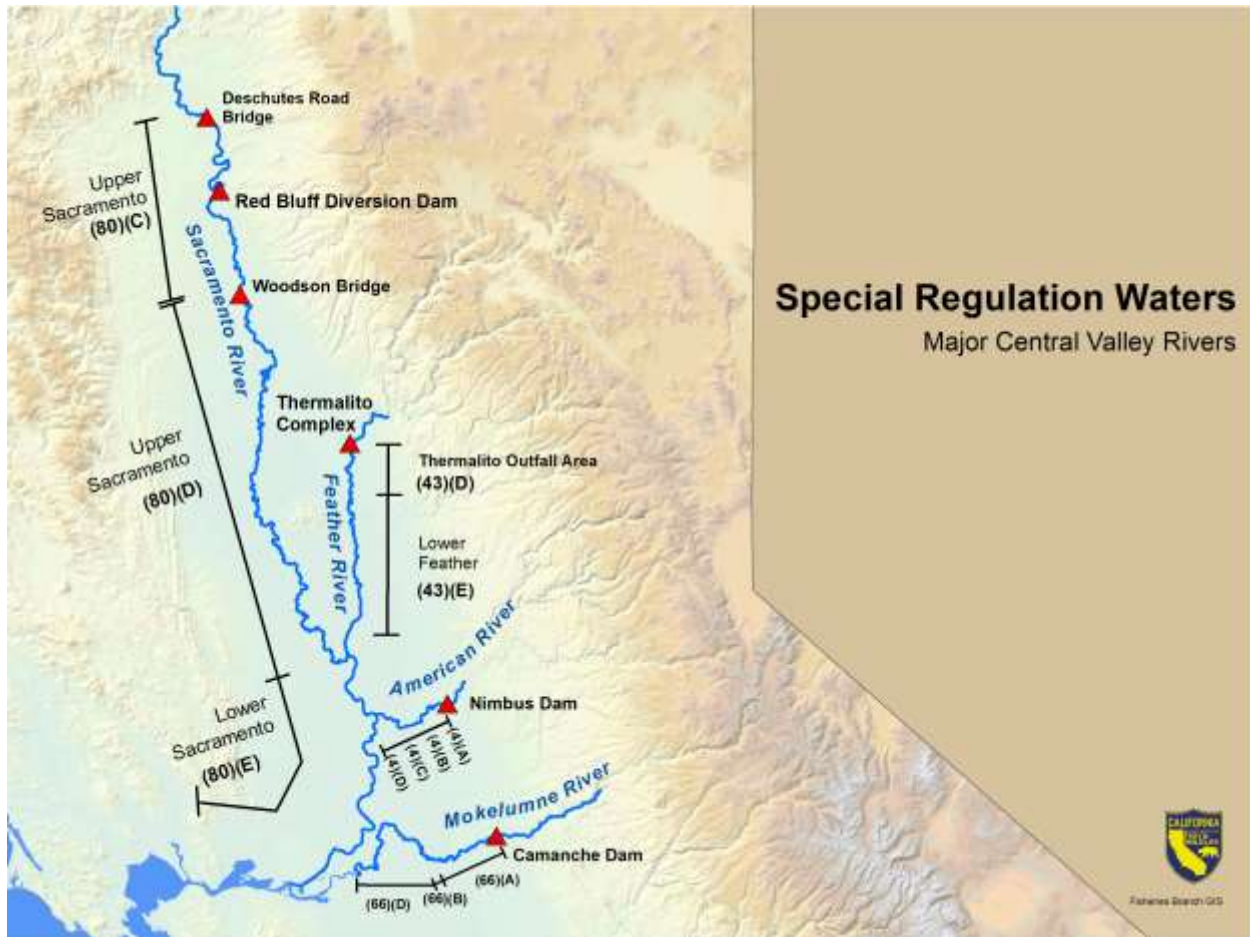


Figure 1. Map of the 2024 “Central Valley fishery” for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon, encompassing the following rivers and their respective subsections of Section 7.40: American (b)(4), Feather (b)(43), Mokelumne (b)(66), and Sacramento (b)(80).

EARLIER PROJECT APPROVAL

CEQA review of the proposed project was conducted in accordance with the Commission’s certified regulatory program approved by the Secretary for the California Natural Resources Agency pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.5 (See generally CCR, Title 14, Sections 781.5 and 15251(b)). CEQA requires all public agencies in the state to evaluate the environmental impacts of discretionary projects they propose to carry out or approve, including promulgating regulations, which may have a potential to significantly affect the environment.

In 2022, the Commission certified a Final ND Regarding Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations (2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations ND)(SCH No. 2022040250) as the lead agency under CEQA as part of the Commission’s review and adoption of the Central Valley sport fishing regulations which focused on the potential for significant environmental impacts from a potential decrease or increase of SRFC daily bag and possession limits for the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers. The

Commission considered the proposed project potential increase of daily bag and possession limits under three regulatory options (i.e., Options 1, 2, and 3 described below). The Commission, as the CEQA lead agency, certified the 2022 ND and determined adoption of the regulations as proposed under Options 1, 2, and 3 or a combination thereof would not result in any new significant or substantially more severe environmental effects. The Commission adopted Option 1 (take and possession of any size Chinook Salmon up to the daily bag and possession limits), with a daily bag limit of two SRFC and a possession limit of four SRFC. This resulted in maintaining the same daily bag and possession limits as the 2021 SRFC sport fishing season.

PROPOSED 2024 CHINOOK SALMON BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) is responsible for adopting recommendations for the management of recreational and commercial ocean salmon fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (three to 200 miles offshore) off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. When approved by the Secretary of Commerce, these recommendations are implemented as ocean salmon fishing regulations by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

The PFMC developed the annual Pacific coast ocean salmon fisheries regulatory options for public review at its March 2024 meeting and will adopt its final regulatory recommendations at its April 2024 meeting based on the PFMC salmon abundance estimates and recommendations for ocean harvest for the coming season. Based on the April 2024 recommendation by PFMC, CDFW will recommend specific bag and possession limit regulations for the Central Valley fishery to the Commission at its April 18, 2024 meeting. The Commission will then consider adoption of the Central Valley sport fishing regulations at its May 15, 2024, meeting.

CDFW is presenting four regulatory options for the Commission's consideration to tailor 2024 Central Valley fishery management to target 2024 in-river fisheries harvest projections. The Commission may adopt these options for each river section independently, or in combination to meet SRFC management objectives and determine the recreational salmon fishing opportunities in the Central Valley. Because the PFMC recommendations are not known at this time, a range shown in [brackets] in the text below of bag and possession limits is indicated where it is desirable to continue Chinook Salmon fishing in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers.

1. Option 1 is the most liberal of the options, and allows take of up to [0-4] Chinook Salmon of any size per day and have [0-12] Chinook Salmon in possession.
2. Option 2 allows for take of up to [0-4] Chinook Salmon per day, with no more than [0-4] of those salmon over 27 inches total length, and have [0-12] Chinook Salmon in

possession, of which no more than [0-12] salmon may be over 27 inches total length.

3. Option 3 is a more conservative option, and allows anglers to take up to [0-4] Chinook Salmon with a maximum size of 27 inches total length and have [0-12] Chinook Salmon in possession, with a maximum size of 27 inches total length.
4. Option 4 is the most conservative option, and prohibits the take and possession of Chinook Salmon in all anadromous areas of and tributaries to the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers.

The 2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations ND found no significant impacts for the range of daily bag and possession limits for SRFC sport fishing under regulatory Options 1, 2, and 3. The 2024 proposed daily bag and possession limits fall within the previously analyzed range of bag and possession limits and regulatory options. Therefore, there are no new significant or substantially more severe impacts from amending the SRFC sport fishing regulations to either reduce or increase the daily bag and possession limits on the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers.

NO SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT IS REQUIRED

In general, CEQA applies whenever a public agency proposes to carry out or approve a discretionary project. (Public Resources Code Section 21080(a)). CEQA provides that, where a public agency proposes to modify a previously approved project for which a Final Environmental Document was prepared and certified:

“An addendum to an adopted negative declaration may be prepared if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary or none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred.” (CCR, Title 14, Section 15164(b))

- A Subsequent Environment Document (Section 15162) when there is substantial evidence that:
 - Substantial changes are proposed in the project, which will require major revisions to the previous environmental impact report (EIR) or environmental document (ED).
 - Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken, which will require major revisions to the previous EIR or environmental documentation.
 - New information, which was not known and could not have been known at the time the previous EIR or ED was certified as complete, becomes available.
- A Supplement to an Environment Document (Section 15163) when:
 - A subsequent ED is not required.
 - Only minor changes to the project are described.

- Only that information to make the ED adequate is provided.
- An Addendum to the Certified ED (Section 15164) is proper when:
 - The changes or additions presented in this project are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent ED have occurred.
 - The Commission may properly prepare and may rely on an addendum in accordance with Section 15164 to fulfill its obligations under CEQA.

NO ADDITIONAL IMPACTS UNDER CEQA

The Commission has determined that amending the current SRFC sport fishing regulations based on PFMC salmon abundance estimates will not result in any new or significant or substantially more severe environmental impacts than previously analyzed and disclosed in the 2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations ND for this project.

This project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. There are no impacts to the habitat of fish and wildlife species.

This approval action adjusts the previous year daily bag and possession limits based on more current salmon abundance estimates. No other aspect of the project is changed. No new significant or substantially more severe impacts under CEQA will occur due to this change.

AMENDMENT OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS

In conclusion, the Commission finds that amending the SRFC sport fishing regulations in CCR, Title 14, Section 7.40, will not result in any new significant or substantially more severe environmental effects than previously analyzed and disclosed in the 2022 Central Valley Sport Fishing Regulations ND. The Commission also finds that subsequent or supplemental review beyond this Addendum is not warranted pursuant to the CCR, Title 14, Section 15164, in connection with this proposed action.

Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director

Date

California Fish and Game Commission